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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the use of varied reading materials to improve French second-language reading skills, found to be unacceptably low at the second-year level. Subjects were 30 high school students of second-year French. A pretest of reading skills and a language and reading attitude survey were administered to the students. Subsequently, a 30-week unit of reading instruction was taught. The unit used diverse texts, including short stories, songs, menus, recipes, advertisements, and cartoons. A survey, individual activities, and a posttest measured outcomes. Students demonstrated improvement in the following areas: reading in French with satisfaction and ease; retelling stories; listing vocabulary words by free association; comprehending main ideas and key details; using context clues to make logical guesses about word meanings; using visual clues to respond to statements in French; and creating a visual based on a description written in French. Results suggest that the method used was effective in improving reading skills and attitudes. The reading attitude survey, a general reading comprehension test, and a pre/posttest of one passage are appended. Contains 59 references. (MSE)

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Using Diverse Texts to Improve the Reading Proficiency of High School Students of French

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Cluster 40

A Practicum II Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1993

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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Approved:

June 13, 1993
Date of Final Approval of Report

Wm W. Anderson
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ABSTRACT

Using Diverse Texts to Improve the Reading Proficiency of High School Students of French. Pulliam, Brenda J., 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Descriptors: Class Activities/Foreign Language Curriculum/French/Group Activities/High Schools/ Language Skills/Reading/Reading Skills/Teaching Methods

Recognizing the need to improve students' reading proficiency in French, the writer developed and implemented a thirty-three-week unit designed to teach reading comprehension to a random sample of 30 high school second-level students. A reading attitude survey and a pretest were administered to determine the ability of students to demonstrate reading proficiency. Teaching strategies included various texts such as short stories, songs, menus, recipes, advertisements, and cartoons. A survey, individual activities, and a posttest measured the outcomes of the implementation. Students demonstrated improvement in the following areas: reading in French with satisfaction and ease, retellings, listing vocabulary words by free association, comprehending main ideas and key details, using contextual clues to make logical guesses about the meaning of words in French, using visual clues to respond to statements in French, and creating a visual based on a description written in French.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community and Work Setting

From its settlement in the early 1800s until the late 1950s, the economic life of the community depended largely upon agriculture and dairy farming. The sudden and unexpected emergence of a nearby municipality as a major commercial and transportation hub, however, changed life forever for this county town, formerly serene and unpretentious, as industrial and residential demands quickly exceeded the limits of the larger city and spread into the suburbs. Its small-town ambience gave way to the demands of urban sprawl as pastoral scenes began to be replaced by myriads of subdivisions, shopping malls, business complexes, parking lots, and highways. Except for its history and the preservation of a few landmarks, nothing remained to give the town any particular distinction. In fact, at the time of the practicum implementation the region had become so populous it was virtually impossible to determine visually where one community ended and another began. Therefore, a view of the population growth of the entire county would be more meaningful than that of the town. Furthermore, the

fact that the majority of the residents lived in single-family dwellings outside the city limits of the town rendered less significance to the population of the incorporated city limits, 3280, according to the 1990 census. Table 1 shows the population growth of the county in the past 60 years (from 1940-1990).

Table 1

Population Growth of the County

Year	Population
1940	11,500
1950	28,000
1960	46,000
1970	98,000
1980	150,000
1990	190,000

Two-thirds of the labor force of this predominantly middle class suburb was employed in services, transportation, public utilities, the retail trade, and government. The average annual income per household was $36,000.

The work setting was a public high school in this suburban community of a large metropolitan area in a southern state. The school, whose history could be traced back to the late 1800s, evolved to the enrollment of approximately 1350 students in grades 9-12 at the time of

the implementation process of this practicum. Built in 1963 and renovated in 1980, the school was one of seven comprehensive high schools in the county educational system of 138,000 students. Operating on the quarter system during the 1992-93 academic year but subsequently on the semester system, the school offered curriculum tracks for general studies, college preparatory, and vocational training.

The 96 members of the instructional staff of the school included 4 administrators, 3 counselors, 2 media specialists, and 87 teachers. Twenty-nine other employees provided support services. Fifty-nine of the faculty members had earned advanced degrees. Namely, 48 had master's degrees and 11 had specialist degrees. Two teachers were pursuing doctorates. Forty percent of the faculty members had taught in the school more than 10 years. Like the student body, there was ethnic diversity among the staff.

The burgeoning of community growth affected, not only the physical appearance of the land, but also the character of the population. While the number of white and black students remained relatively proportionate, the influx of ethnic groups, especially Hispanics and Asians, increased. Five years ago the representation of any minority except Blacks was less than 1%. Table 2 illustrates present student ethnic distribution.

Table 2

Present Student Ethnic Distribution

Ethnic background	Percent
Caucasian	67
Black	24
Hispanic	5
Asian	4

Although the population of the community almost quadrupled in the past 30 years, the length of the writer's tenure at the school, the number of students remained fairly consistent because of a continual building program required to accommodate the rapidly growing numbers of students in the system. In fact, seven teachers were transferred to other schools in the system for the 1992-93 academic year, an action that had ramifications for the school of the writer. That is, some teachers had larger classes or an additional teaching or duty assignment.

The Writer's Role in the Work Setting

The writer was a French teacher with 30 years of teaching experience and chaired the Foreign Language Department, composed of five teachers, for the past 24 years. During the 1992-93 academic year 35% of the students were enrolled in French, Latin, Japanese, or Spanish classes. A state mandate limited the class size of foreign

language classes utilizing a language laboratory to a maximum of 30 students.

The teaching assignment of the writer for the same school year was two classes each of first and second levels of French. As the proficiency-oriented approach to foreign language teaching was being implemented in foreign language classrooms, her role included that of learning model and facilitator in a setting where student-centered activities replaced the traditional teacher-centered classroom.

As chair, she was responsible for the monitoring of adherence to state and county mandates governing the department and serving as liaison between members of the department and the administration, both on the school and county levels. In addition, it was the responsibility of the writer to maintain departmental records and develop an annual budget as well as order, distribute, and supervise the use and care of equipment and supplies.

Professional preparation included a bachelor's degree in French and English and a master's degree in French. Through the auspices of a federal grant she also studied at a university in France. Professional competence was enhanced by coordinating and leading student study abroad programs and adult goodwill exchanges between France and the United States, by personal travel to several European countries, by serving on committees to develop and revise the state teacher certification test in French, by

participating in staff development programs, by developing and revising county and state foreign language curricula, by judging local and state foreign language competitions, by coordinating county foreign language festivals, by presenting foreign language workshops on the local, state, and regional levels, and by participating actively in professional organizations.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The problem identified for this practicum was that students in the writer's second-level French classes had difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing reading material in the target language (L2). Specifically, they were unable to retell stories in L2, list by free association French words and their English equivalents within a schema, respond appropriately to passages written in L2 by answering questions based on the passages, use contextual clues to make logical guesses about the meanings of unfamiliar words and phrases, create visuals based on descriptions written in L2, and read in L2 with expressed satisfaction and ease. There were several reasons that the problem had not been solved. Among them was the paucity of relevant strategies included in French textbooks aimed at improving students' receptive language skills, including reading. Another reason was that in their effort to produce students with language proficiency, teachers often tended to stress the spoken language almost exclusively. Also, some students failed to overcome their fear of or dislike for reading in English and as a result lacked initiative for

self-directed strategies to improve their reading comprehension in L2. In brief, the writer's students did not possess adequate skills necessary to read proficiently in the French language.

Problem Documentation

Evidence of the problem was documented in part by the results of a reading attitude survey and a reading comprehension test. Both were administered to a random sample of 30 second-year students of French in May of 1992. Results of the survey (see Appendix A) revealed that while 25 in the sample indicated that they enjoyed reading in both English and French (see items A1 and A3), 12 indicated that they read in English with satisfaction and relative ease (see item A2); and only 4 indicated that they read in L2 with satisfaction and relative ease (see item A4). Whereas only 4 indicated that they read material in L2 more than that which is required (see item A5), 29 indicated that they would like to have more reading practice in French (see item A8). Eight indicated that they preferred individual reading activities (see item A9), but 26 indicated enjoyment for group work when reading in French (see item A10). Of those 29 that indicated that they would like more opportunities to read in French, they were unanimous in their choices (see item A11). That is, they chose all the options available except for books (see item B). The writer determined the

range of positive responses on the survey to be either in the "always" or "usually" category.

Results of the reading comprehension test (see Appendix B) administered in June of 1992 showed that 18 out of 30 students demonstrated deficient basic reading skills in L2. Specifically, 12 scored as many as 7 out of 10 items containing familiar vocabulary without a prereading activity (see sections A and B); but only 1 student scored as many as two out of seven items containing unfamiliar vocabulary without any prereading activity but with the use of an English/French dictionary (see section C). Clearly, results of the reading comprehension test revealed students' inability to comprehend and synthesize the written language to elicit either main ideas or key details, even when contextual clues were evident.

A third method of gathering data to document the problem was information obtained in conversations with 25 other high school teachers in the spring of 1992. The L2 teachers with whom the writer conversed concurred unanimously that most of their students lacked a reading ability in L2 within a 70% range of proficiency as determined by teacher observations and evaluations of student progress and further agreed that their students exhibited problems in reading for comprehension in English as well as in L2. Ten English and math teachers lent

support to the premise that students have difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing the written word.

Results of the survey and the test and conversations with other teachers supported the central thesis of the writer. That is, students in the writer's second-level French classes neither comprehended nor synthesized reading material in L2.

Causative Analysis

It was the contention of the writer that there were six causes for the problem of reading difficulties by high school students enrolled in foreign language classes. One cause was students' lack of interest in reading in their first language (L1) that negatively affected their attitude toward reading in L2. Young people lead busy, hectic lives that leave few occasions for the development of skills that require any substantial amount of time. Also, the deluge of quick-fix gadgets and visual media such as television and video tapes provides young people with instant gratification without requiring any effort on their part, especially any imaginative energy, as reading does. Thus, students tend to regard reading as a boring, time-consuming, cumbersome, even obsolete and unnecessary skill.

A second cause for the problem was students' lack of sufficient linguistic skills and successful L1 reading strategies, a lack that impeded their success in reading in L2. Obviously, since students lacked motivation to read,

they failed to acquire the skills in L1 to be successful in L2. Furthermore, some teachers assumed that students had learned to read adequately in English by the time they entered high school and, therefore, did not teach reading strategies.

Third, promoting reading proficiency in L2 by foreign language teachers was often sacrificed in lieu of emphasizing the traditional active skills, especially the skill of speaking. While the balanced-skills approach is espoused by advocates of proficiency, the newest effort to revolutionize L2 study, teachers often discovered there was not enough class time to allocate sufficient emphasis to each of the four basic L2 skills, especially since the majority of students follow no more than a two-year course of L2 study.

Fourth, interference from L1 was a problem for students learning to read in L2. For example, students tended to attempt to read L2 according to the syntactic patterns of L1. Furthermore, they were often misled by false cognates, idioms, and expressions conveying cultural implications in L2.

A fifth cause of the problem was a scarcity of textbooks that included adequate strategies to aid students in the development of their reading comprehension skills in L2. The foreign language teachers interviewed by the writer for this practicum agreed that texts with recent copyright

dates contained few authentically appropriate reading activities. Also, they lamented the fact that they often hesitated to use some textual passages because they contained inadequate or incorrect data about the target culture. In examining recently published textbooks of French, the writer found examples of both inaccuracies and misleading statements made by some authors about people and cultures of francophone countries.

A sixth cause of the problem was the failure of the reading activities of some L2 textbooks to correspond to the cultural background, cognitive skills, and interests of the students. Many reading passages in L2 texts focused on historical and geographical aspects alone and infrequently included passages to which students could personally relate. In the specific case of the students of the writer, their inability to demonstrate proficiency in reading comprehension appeared to bear upon some of the causes for the problem delineated in this practicum.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

A review of the literature provided evidence of the problem that students had difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing information in L2. Schmitt (1991) identified the lack of confidence manifested by students to make educated guesses as to the meanings of words in order to gain a general understanding of a reading selection, thereby denying them the pleasure and pride of being able to

ascertain the main idea and to avoid the tendency to struggle to comprehend every word. "Reading" (1985), Magrath (1987), and Eskey and Grabe (1990) reported that students become discouraged by texts that are either dull, irrelevant, or too laden with complex structures and new vocabulary. They added that students are further frustrated by the need for additional explanations required for a minimal degree of understanding of the textual readings.

"Reading" (1985) insisted that, even though improvements have been made in the structure of texts since the inception of the proficiency movement to accommodate a sequenced approach to reading proficiency, many texts still reflect a contrived and artificial format. In addition, Bryan (1986) expressed her concern that materials are often inappropriate for the learner's level of maturity or else they lack a sense of reality for the learner. Garreton and Medley (1986) and Kern (1988) theorized that the L2 learner's hesitancy to accept certain reading material may be the result of a misfit between the instructional strategies and the stage of cognitive development of the learner.

While Rivers (1983) surmised that students' inability to read well is directly related to their prior experiences and knowledge, Omaggio (1986) pointed out that the problem is often exacerbated by teachers who assume that students arrive for L2 study already equipped with sufficient reading

skills. Magrath (1987) lamented the fact that while there is universal acceptance that reading is a skill vital to communicating in L2, too often the process is delayed, thus adding to students' reluctance to read in the target language.

The literature gave further evidence of the problem. That reading in L2 poses considerable difficulties for students was supported by Alderson (1984), who concurred with Swaffar (1984) that few students exhibit the ability to function adequately beyond a basic level of reading comprehension after two years of study. Belasco (1981) concluded that no student is able to achieve any considerable degree of reading proficiency in only two years of L2 study.

Additional evidence was provided by Diller (1981), who supported the existence of the problems created by a paucity of progressively designed reading material available to students of L2. Bransford, Stein, and Shelton (1984) and Carrell and Eisterhold (1990) cited evidence of the problems created when students of L2 are not active participants in the process to correlate their reading with their own background and prior knowledge. According to Krashen (1989), there was evidence that reading problems of L2 students exist as a result of L2 educators' failing to encourage students to read in L2. Lowe (1984) discussed evidence of the problem encountered by students who

experience a loss or distortion of meaning when they do not convert short-term memory to long-term memory.

In conclusion, the literature supported the premise that students enrolled in foreign language classes had difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing reading material in L2. The problem identified for this practicum was that students in the writer's second-level French classes had difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing reading material in L2.

The literature revealed several causes for the problem. Alderson (1984), Crow (1986), and Magrath (1987) reported that the general lack of good reading skills of students in L1 was a major factor in students' inability to read proficiently in L2. According to Alderson and Pfister and Poser (1987), students' difficulty with cognitive concepts in L1 is a major factor in poor reading performance in L2. Hammerly (1986), Kern (1988), and Papalia (1987) noted that interference of L1 is frequently a cause of reading problems in L2. Chase (1984), Giauque (1987), and "Reading" (1985) maintained that students often lack either an intrinsic or an extrinsic motivation to read; and Hammerly and Eskey and Grabe (1990) added that students' lack of interest in reading in L1 transfers to their L2 study, but often not the L1 reading skills they do possess, reported "Reading." Nunan (1989) and Pfister and Poser cited that successful reading experiences in L2 are doubtful

if the cultural content of the reading material is not consistent with the learner's cultural knowledge.

The causes for the problem were further delineated by the literature. Hammerly (1986) and Schulz (1984) contended that some L2 teachers themselves lack the proficiency and self-confidence to read in L2 and, therefore, avoid the teaching of reading in L2. Barnett (1988) concurred with them and further attested that too many texts fail to include activities for developing reading skills or else they contain passages that are too difficult for the L2 learner, who may become frustrated by the process. Belasco (1981) and Ford (1984) lamented the fact that a lack of class time prohibits adequate presentation of materials required for each student to become proficient in any of the basic L2 skills. Hammadou (1990) suggested that teachers may fail to guide students in transferring to L2 prior knowledge and useful L1 reading strategies.

The literature supported the writer's position that students enrolled in L2 courses did not possess the ability to comprehend and synthesize reading material in L2. In addition, the literature offered evidence of the existence as well as causes for the problem. Some teachers with whom the writer communicated for this practicum expressed a feeling of inadequacy to deal with their students' reading problems and indicated a need for effective aids and training designed to empower them to address the situation

effectively. However, according to Omaggio (1986), the sparseness of published materials for addressing students' difficulty to read in L2 may preclude teachers' being able to locate appropriate literature on the subject.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

Goals and Expectations

The goal of the writer was that students attain reading proficiency in the French language. For the purpose of this practicum, reading proficiency was defined as the attainment of the objectives by the students.

Expected Outcomes

The writer proposed that the students' reading comprehension be increased by the end of the eight-month implementation period. The sample population was 30 high school students of second-level French, selected on a random basis and ranging in age from 15-17 years of age in grades 10, 11, and 12.

There were eight objectives. First, the writer expected that at the end of the implementation period 21 out of 30 students would indicate on a reading attitude survey with a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = always, 2 = usually, 3 = rarely, and 4 = never) that they read with at least 25% more satisfaction and ease than they indicated on a reading attitude survey given at the beginning of the implementation period. Second, when given a story to read in the target

language, 21 out of 30 students would be able to display reading comprehension by retelling the story at the end of the implementation period with a minimum score of 50 on a scale of 0 to 100 and a mean score representing improvement of 30% over a retelling done by the students at the beginning of the implementation period. Third, 21 out of 30 students would display at the end of the implementation period knowledge of vocabulary by listing by free association at least 50% more French words and their English equivalents within a given category than at the beginning of the implementation period. Fourth, 21 out of 30 students would be able to demonstrate on a posttest comprehension of main ideas and key details of a passage written in the target language by responding to 10 questions with no more than three errors and with a minimum mean score representing 30% improvement over a pretest. Fifth, when given unfamiliar French words and phrases on a posttest, students would correctly use contextual clues 7 out of 10 times to make logical guesses about their meaning and with an improvement represented by a mean score of 30% higher than on the pretest. Sixth, when given 10 true-false statements written in the target language and based on a visual, 21 out of 30 students would be able on a posttest to respond with no more than three errors and would achieve a mean score representing an improvement of 30% over a pretest. Seventh, when given a description written in the target language and

including 10 features, 21 out of 30 students would be able on a posttest to create a visual with no more than three errors and would achieve a mean score representing 30% improvement over a visual created on a pretest. Eighth, 21 out of 30 students would achieve a minimum score of 70 out of 100 on a posttest.

Measurements of Outcomes

The writer used four instruments for the purpose of measuring the eight objectives proposed in this practicum. These instruments were a reading attitude survey (see Appendix A), a retelling, a free-association activity, and a posttest (see Appendix C). The survey consisted of one section composed of 11 statements which the students completed by choosing "always," "usually," "sometimes," or "never" and one section composed of five items ranked by the students in order of preference on a scale of 1 as first choice and 5 as last choice. Ten minutes were allotted for its administration. The written retelling by the students was based on a passage in L2. Their comprehension of the main ideas and key details received a rank of poor to excellent (<5 = poor, 5-6 = fair, 7-8 = good, and 9-10 = excellent). Thirty minutes were allotted for this activity. The free-association exercise required the students to list within 15 minutes as many French words and their English equivalents as possible within a category. Students were expected to list at least 10 vocabulary words and their

meanings. The posttest consisted of 10 short-answer, 10 multiple-choice, 10 true-false items, and the creation of a visual. It required two class periods for its administration.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The problem identified for this practicum was that students in the writer's second-level classes of French had difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing reading material in L2. The literature provided evidence that the problem was pervasive among L2 students in general but also offered possible solutions.

The literature revealed evidence that consideration of the learner's sense of awareness was a possible solution to the problem. Kern (1988) advised that activities which accurately address and assess the needs of the learners be chosen. Specifically, he advocated the use of activities focusing on improving reading speed, identifying main ideas, determining relationships, and forming predictions and hypotheses. As a result, a variety of strategies was utilized to develop students' ability to manipulate readings by changing beginnings, endings, and descriptions of settings and characters.

Adams (1983), Barnett (1988), Davis (1992), de Berkeley-Weiss (1983), Glisan (1988), Kraetschmer (1984), McCormick (1988), Nagy (1984), Papalia (1987), Pfister and

Poser (1987), Richard-Amato (1988), and Swaffar (1984) maintained that components representing the backgrounds and knowledge of students be selected and that students be encouraged to relate their interests and prior knowledge with the reading, as well as to deduce their own meanings (Davis, 1989). The materials chosen for reading activities reflected the diversity of the student population. As they read, the students participated in discussions and problem-solving exercises and developed and presented dialogues, minidramas, commercials, interviews, and other simulation activities based on their readings.

Seelye (1991) asserted that attitudes of students are improved when they encounter positive and enjoyable learning experiences. Subsequently, the writer set up within the classroom a reading center supplied with materials devised to encourage voluntary reading and to provide ample opportunities for students to share what they learned with each other. Included among the collection was a variety of authentic materials, including music, and graded genre types designed to attract students representing a wide range of prior knowledge, backgrounds, reading levels, and interests. The writer provided classroom experiences, including the simulation activities, the production of collages and alphabets, and character sketches that proved to be pleasant as well as educational for the students.

Byram (1989), Langer (1989), and Luce (1991) offered that students are motivated to learn when the learning experience is humanized and relevant. Moreover, they concurred that students' creativity and imagination are whetted when learning experiences are centered on issues they care about and can personally relate to. Therefore, students were encouraged to research topics of their choice and to develop appropriate projects based on their reading experiences in L2. Finally, as suggested by Davis (1989), who maintained that "the understanding of the information provided must be interpreted in terms of a real world value system" (p. 422), students incorporated their readings into actual life situations, such as corresponding with a francophone pen pal and using French recipes to prepare meals and accompanying menus.

The literature offered evidence that activities designed to develop specific reading skills have positive results for L2 learners. Specifically, Crow (1986) and Omaggio (1986) encouraged the use of activities that teach contextualized, receptive cognitive concepts as well as those that help students develop specific skills in reading; and Pellissier (1984) urged that the reader be given materials that encourage decoding in an inductive way. The writer incorporated the study of vocabulary with reading strategies that included both pre- and post-reading activities as recommended by Barnett (1988), Iandoli (1991),

Lund (1991), Pfister and Poser (1987), and Rusterholz (1987). As a result, each student developed a folio of new words and phrases, opinions, problems, resources, and creative ideas.

Hammerly (1986), Long and Harlow (1988), and Pfister and Poser (1987) contended that silent speech be used by readers in order to advance their reading proficiency, that specially adapted materials containing simple vocabulary and structure be used until the advanced level, that readings be exploited fully in class, that the evaluation process correlate with activities, and that reading efforts of the students be rewarded. As regarding the importance of systematically graduated reading material in L2, Hammerly iterated emphatically that "the constant interruption of looking up words with texts with very high new-word density . . . is time-wasting and frustrating" (p. 492). The writer provided ample individual quiet time for reading carefully chosen passages containing controlled vocabulary and grammatical elements as well as those that offered challenges for the development of extensive reading skills.

Also, comprehension checks represented the types of reading activities exploited by the students. For example, retellings in both English and French were utilized as a means to increase proficiency, as recommend by Krashen (1987). In addition, student performance was rewarded with

frequent praise by the writer and by the display of student work.

The literature presented evidence of the balanced-skills approach as a possible solution to the problem of students' learning to read in L2. Omaggio (1986), Richard-Amato (1988), and Swaffar (1984) maintained that a total integration of the basic skills of language learning be utilized in the reading program, whereas Belasco (1981), Hammerly (1986), and Pattison (1987) insisted that for the first two years of language study the emphasis be on the receptive skills of listening and reading. As some of the leading authorities of L2 are proponents of proficiency, it is generally expected that L2 teachers unquestioningly support a balanced skills program. However, for the sake of this practicum and because of her conviction that an emphasis on the receptive skills, especially in the initial two years of L2 study, is a substantial factor in fostering a lifelong appreciation for reading by L2 students, the writer devoted a maximal amount of class time to the teaching of appropriate reading strategies.

Evidence of the importance of the role of the teacher as a possible solution was found in the literature. Candlin (1983) and Plaister (1981) insisted that the teacher's role as well as reading materials be re-evaluated so that the emphasis may be on the learner and the learning process. They concurred with Birckbichler and Muyskens (1980) that

teachers need to structure activities in order to ensure student success. Papalia (1987) declared that the teaching of reading in L2 is greatly enhanced when the teacher relinquishes the spotlight to the students as they engage in a productive cacophony of interactive strategies. Following Papalia's contention and Pfister and Poser's (1987) affirmation that the essential role of the teacher is to stimulate "awareness and foster tolerance" (p. viii), the writer assumed the role of learning facilitator, informant, and role model during the implementation period and assigned units of work to be done individually, with a partner, in small groups, and as an entire class.

Active participation of students through group interactions was lauded by Omaggio (1986), Richard-Amato (1986), and Rivers (1983), who agreed that students greatly benefit by the personalization made possible when students actively participate in the learning process. Projects such as reading alphabets and minidramas based on readings and the creation of collages gave students the opportunity to maximize group efforts. In this way, the practicum experience attempted to capitalize on the positive learning strategies of all the students.

Bragger (1989) enumerated several systematic solutions as concerning teachers. His foremost suggestion was that reading be accomplished both as an in-class activity and homework. He also exhorted teachers to use a wide variety

of reading sources and admonished them to teach students to utilize the process of skimming prior to that of scanning and to present comprehension checks in L1 before requiring comprehension checks to be accomplished in L2. The writer incorporated Bragger's suggestions as corollaries to the procedures planned for the implementation period.

The literature also addressed the importance of choosing appropriate readings for L2 students as a possible solution to the problem. For example, Grellet (1981), Long and Harlow (1988), Melvin and Stout (1987), "Reading" (1985), Rusterholz (1987), Swaffar (1984), and Zeller and Melvin (1983) recommended the use of authentic materials. Also, Giauque (1987) suggested that selecting materials students are already familiar with in L1 facilitates comprehension and fosters the communication of ideas. Further, according to Hamblin (1991) and Krashen (1989), light reading, including popular music, may foster the appreciation of more sophisticated texts. The writer included among reading options for the students authentic materials that they might have some prior knowledge of even as they began their participation in the practicum experience, as well as advertisements and signs, scripts of songs, comic books, cartoons, and jokes written in L2. Agreeing with Rivers (1983) that recognition of the written language should be much greater than recall, Walz (1990a, 1990b) extolled the use of a bilingual dictionary as a

valuable tool in the teaching of reading skills to L2 students. The writer used intervention strategies to aid the students in acquiring problem-solving skills involving both recall and internalization of reading skills.

Description of Selected Solution

In order to solve the problem of students' inability to comprehend and synthesize reading material in French, the writer assumed the role of facilitator, informant, and role model during the implementation period. The teaching strategy selected constituted the use of diverse reading texts within the context of student-centered activities. Performing individually and in groups of varying sizes, each student engaged in graduated reading projects designed to attract their attention, retain their interest, challenge and expand their cognitive ability, appeal to their affective nature, and establish a foundation for a lifelong enjoyment of reading. Having found an ample body of research substantiating the merit of such a strategy, having received support from colleagues, and having effected successful teaching strategies in the past, the writer was confident that her choice of diverse texts to teach reading comprehension to her second-level students of French would be successful.

While it was true that the writer had had previous experience in teaching reading comprehension to her students of French, the most obvious difference in the approach used

in this practicum lay in the intensity and depth of concentration on this skill during the implementation period. According to Pfister and Poser (1987), reading ability in L2 is considered a problem-solving behavior which can be increased by independent practice, unlike other L2 skills. Previously, the writer had attempted to accord a relatively equitable amount of emphasis to each of the basic L2 skills. However, for the sake of this practicum, reading was the primary focus from which other skills were taught.

The writer concluded that her solution to the problem was accomplished in her setting. The writer received support of the administrative personnel and other faculty members of her school. Her classroom, a renovated language laboratory, provided a setting with ample space for the unconstricted movement of the students and for displaying and storing materials required for the implementation of this practicum and those created by the students. In addition, the writer had access to considerable authentic resources accumulated through the years as the result of her having collected materials offered at workshops and conferences; memorabilia gathered during travels to francophone countries; letters and cards received from French-speaking friends; and books, magazines, newspapers, comic books, and miscellaneous realia obtained from both domestic and French sources. Finally, additional materials and supplies required for this practicum were supplied by

the school and by the central office. By means of guiding students in their quest to attain reading comprehension skills in French, the writer had a number of anticipations for the implementation of this practicum. The most ambitious anticipation was that the students develop a more positive view of themselves as a result of the improvement of reading skills. In order to facilitate the realization of this aspiration, the writer provided a safe, non-threatening, student-centered, success-oriented learning environment in which students felt free to explore creatively reading in L2. Further, the writer attempted to provide stimulating, challenging, and interesting activities to ensure student success. Finally, it was also the aspiration of the writer that the students gain a sense of value of and appreciation for reading to the extent that their experience might provide the foundation for a lifetime of meaningful reading for a multiplicity of purposes.

Report of Action Taken

The projected timeline for the implementation of this practicum was 33 weeks. The sample population was 30 high school students enrolled in the writer's second-level classes of French. They were selected on a random basis and ranged in age from 15-17 years and were in grades 10, 11, and 12.

Prior to implementation a series of procedures was followed. A copy of the proposal was given to the

principal, with whom the procedures for the implementation process were discussed. Arrangements were made for library resources to be made available as required by the writer and the students. The writer collected and organized materials needed for the implementation. Lesson plans included activities and assignments that reflected the stated objectives in this practicum and those which correlated with the guidelines of the Quality Core Curriculum established by the Quality Basic Education Act of 1985.

During week one of the implementation period the writer provided the rationale and schema of the process to the students. The writer also administered the Reading Attitude Survey and the pretest to the students.

During weeks two, three, and four each student initiated a reading folio and chose a reading partner. Students were divided into small groups; they discussed purposes for and personal attitudes about reading and reported their findings to the class. They brainstormed in order to generate a consortium of expectations concerning the process. Exercises using cognates to make guesses about the meanings of words were given. Students learned to use a bilingual dictionary and indicated previously learned vocabulary and phrases. Opportunities were given for students to peruse the collection of reading materials in the classroom reading area and to become acquainted with procedures for making entries in their folios which were

used throughout the implementation period. The first of frequent comprehension checks was made.

During weeks five, six, and seven students were given short reading passages to develop their skills to guess the meanings of new words from context. They were given short reading passages to develop their skills of skimming and scanning and to teach them to unscramble the order of sentences of reading passages to achieve a sense of logical sequences. They began to use the materials in the reading center and to make folio entries, activities that were a regular part of the process.

During weeks eight, nine, and ten students matched descriptions of people with drawings provided by the writer, made representational drawings of people from written descriptions, identified classmates from written descriptions, and chose appropriate headlines to match descriptions of people. They made appropriate substitutions in passages containing descriptive errors and also began to participate in games in L2 such as Mille Bornes.

During weeks eleven, twelve, and thirteen students discussed information requested on forms (employment, club membership, passport, medical history, school registration, accident report, scholarship application, etc.) written in English and contributed by students. They read similar forms written in French and indicated the purpose of each, after which they filled out the forms written in French.

They also compiled vocabulary alphabets based on their readings.

During weeks fourteen and fifteen students retold orally, paraphrased, and summarized reading passages. They used texts as sources for simulation activities which they presented to the class.

During weeks sixteen and seventeen texts exercises were used to solicit student reactions and opinions. Students converted textual material into interviews and newspaper reports. Comprehension of passages about Christmas traditions in francophone countries were demonstrated through retellings.

During weeks eighteen, nineteen, and twenty students identified products described in ads, chose captions for ads and product information, and wrote responses to classified ads. Students listened to music as they followed written scripts. Dictations over some of the less difficult scripts were given.

During weeks twenty-one, twenty-two, and twenty-three students studied menus and produced skits related to dining at a restaurant, made lists of terms associated with cooking, studied recipes, and made plans for a culinary experience. They planned menus, made a cookbook of French recipes, and prepared French dishes.

During weeks twenty-four, twenty-five, and twenty-six students matched cartoon strips with balloons. They

reorganized texts with missing parts, scrambled sentences, and fractured phrases. Students shared letters from francophone pen pals.

During weeks twenty-seven and twenty-eight students guessed the subject of French songs whose titles they were given and predicted the story line of French movies whose titles they were given. Simulation activities and retellings were used. Students played the French version of Trivial Pursuit.

During weeks twenty-nine and thirty students wrote appropriate endings to stories. They manipulated story parts by changing beginnings, endings, and character descriptions. Students created collages of memorabilia collected during the implementation period.

During weeks thirty-one and thirty-two students read passages and then made predictions about characters and events in those readings. They also wrote narratives in which they reacted to poems and song scripts and prepared potpourri alphabets.

During week thirty-three exercises that incorporated reading strategies and students' folios served as a review. The posttest was administered, the results of which were compared to those of the pretest to determine the degree of success of the implementation process.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The problem identified for this practicum was that students in the writer's second-level French classes had difficulty in comprehending and synthesizing reading material in the target language. Specifically, they were unable to retell stories in L2, to list by free association words within a category, or to respond appropriately to passages written in L2.

In solving the problem the writer designed and implemented a thirty-three-week unit of study focusing on the use of various texts written in French. Having found an ample body of research to substantiate the value of using a variety of reading materials in the foreign language classroom and having previously experienced success in incorporating such materials with her students, the writer developed the unit of study to improve the reading proficiency of second-level students of high school French.

While the writer established the guidelines and evaluation procedures, the students assumed much of the responsibility in executing the unit. With the writer's role being that of facilitator, informant, and role model,

the students had the opportunity to exercise an active role in the learning process. The writer's assuming this role permitted the students to have substantial flexibility in making decisions about their individual performance and participating in activities that affected their peers as well. While the students were expected to perform many tasks individually, a consortium of experiences involved pair work, small group projects, and whole class activities as well.

Sources of reading included the textbook, magazines, newspapers, letters and cards, comic books, joke books, cartoons, poems and songs, signs and advertisements, menus, recipes, and short stories. The target group consisted of 30 randomly selected students enrolled in her second-level classes of French.

The goal of the writer was for the students to improve their reading proficiency by the end of the implementation process to the extent that they would be able to demonstrate their ability to read in the French language. The acceptable level of proficiency established for the purpose of this practicum was the achievement of the objectives by the students. The objectives and results were as follows:

Objective 1: 21 out of 30 students would indicate that they read in French with 25% more satisfaction and ease at the end of the implementation process than at the beginning.

Results: based on item A3 of a reading attitude survey, 23 students enjoyed reading in French 25% more than they had at the onset of the process. Based on item A4 of the survey, 22 students read in French with 25% more ease than at the beginning of the implementation period.

Objective 2: 21 out of 30 students would demonstrate reading comprehension by means of retelling with at least a score of 5 out of 10 points and a mean score representing improvement of 30% at the end of the implementation as compared to a retelling at the beginning.

Results: 26 of the students were able to retell a story with at least a score of 5. Fourteen students achieved a score of 6 or 7, and 7 students earned a score of 8-10. These results indicate a mean score representing improvement of 58%.

Objective 3: 21 out of 30 students would demonstrate their knowledge of vocabulary by listing by free association at least 50% more French words with their English equivalents within a category at the end of the implementation than they were able to do at the beginning.

Results: 25 students were able to list at least 10 words of a category in French and their equivalents in English. These results indicate that each student showed improvement of at least 100% more words.

Objective 4: 21 out of 30 students would demonstrate on a posttest comprehension of main ideas and key details of

a passage written in French by responding correctly to 10 questions based on the passage with no more than three errors and with a minimum mean score representing 30% improvement over a pretest.

Results: based on section A of the posttest, 21 students were able to answer correctly seven or more questions based on a reading passage written in French. The results produced a mean score representing improvement of 124%.

Objective 5: 21 out of 30 students would be able on a posttest to use contextual clues to make logical guesses about meanings of 10 words with no more than three errors and with a minimum mean score of 30% higher than on a pretest.

Results: based on section B of the posttest, 22 students successfully guessed the meanings of at least 7 out of 10 words. These results produced a mean score of 105% improvement.

Objective 6: 21 out of 30 students would respond correctly on a posttest to 10 true/false statements written in French and based on a visual with no more than three errors and with a minimum score indicating 30% improvement over a pretest.

Results: based on section C of the posttest, all students responded correctly to least seven statements.

These results produced a mean score representing improvement of 30%.

Objective 7: 21 out of 30 students would create on a posttest a visual when they were given a written description written in French with no more than three errors and with a mean score representing 30% improvement over a visual created on a pretest.

Results: based on section D of the posttest, 27 students created a visual with no more than three errors. These results produced a mean score representing 96% improvement.

Objective 8: 21 out of 30 students would achieve on a posttest a minimum score of 70 and a mean score representing 30% improvement over a pretest.

Results: 24 students achieved a score of 70 or above. The mean score of 79 represented 80% improvement.

Discussion

Two assessment instruments were used in the implementation process of this practicum. The Reading Attitude Survey (see Appendix A), which consisted of ranking of items and assessed student attitudes about reading in English and in French, was employed both at the beginning and at the end of implementation. A positive response was determined to be either "always" or "usually." A tally of the positive responses to items relating to students'

personal interaction with reading both at the beginning of implementation and at the end is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Tally of Positive Responses on Reading Attitude Survey by 30 Respondents

	Begin	End
I like to read in English	24	28
I read in English with ease	28	30
I like to read in French	18	24
I read in French with ease	2	14
I am satisfied with my ability to read in French	7	15
I read more in French than is required to pass this course	6	11
I would like to have more reading practice in French	24	26
I like individual reading activities in French	14	13
I like individual reading activities that include a partner or a group	27	27

Results of the Reading Attitude Survey revealed that most of the students enjoyed reading in both English and French prior to implementation. Two students who had specified on the initial survey that they liked to read in both English and in French at a level of "sometimes" indicated on the second administration that they "usually" enjoyed reading in both languages. Seven other students'

rating improved 25% as well in both categories. Only one student, who indicated that she "never" enjoyed reading in English nor in French, selected "rarely" in either category on the first survey; none marked "rarely" on the second survey.

The survey also revealed an overwhelming choice for reading activities that involve interactions with other students. While students were occasionally required to work alone, their affinity for group work contributed greatly to the continuity and success of much of the process.

Item 11 of the survey indicated their choices for further reading in French. Table 4 shows the tally for choices by the students on the two surveys. Students were permitted to choose as many items for further reading as they wished.

Table 4

Tally of Choices for Further Reading by 30 Respondents

Choices	Begin	End
News items	6	16
Magazine articles	8	18
Poems and songs	20	22
Short stories	8	17
Books	3	5

(table continues)

Choices	Begin	End
Signs/Ads	9	6
Personal correspondence	20	12
Comics and cartoons	19	29
Menus/Recipes	11	22

The choices for further reading made by the students indicate possible changes in attitude toward reading. For example, the survey given at the beginning of the implementation reveals that the reading interest of the students resided mainly in items of a personal or social nature such as poems and songs, signs and advertisements, and corresponding with a pen pal. The post survey implies that the students became more conscious of the world as indicated by their choices of news articles and short stories. It is interesting to note that the students gained in appreciation of menus and recipes and comics and cartoons by the end of the process as well. The high scores for those two items evinced their enthusiasm in the culinary project and the Charlie Brown and Asterix books in French. When pressed about their lower ranking for personal correspondence on the second survey, they shared that being a good pen pal required more time and energy than they

wished to give and that they felt it was unfair to a pen pal to communicate only halfheartedly.

In ranking types of reading comprehension checks (see Appendix A, item 11B), the students' overwhelming choice was to draw pictures based on written descriptions. That 28 out of 30 students scored seven or above on the posttest (see Appendix C, section D) is evident that they were able to demonstrate the ability to create such a visual. The second choice was answering questions. In an informal discussion some students reported that they would not have made this choice if they had had to respond to the questions in French because of their lack of writing proficiency in French. As writing is the last basic skill to be mastered in either a first or subsequent languages, their response reflects the natural order for mastering any language. The least preferred means of evaluation specified by the students were to guess the meanings of words and list vocabulary words in a category. The ranking of types of comprehension checks by the students on the second survey is shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Ranking of Comprehension Checks by 30 Respondents

Check	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Summarize/Retell	8	8	6	3	5

(table continues)

Check	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Answer questions	1	14	7	4	4
Guess meanings of words	1	4	7	15	3
List words by category	1	1	5	5	18
Draw pictures from written descriptions	19	3	5	3	0

In reference to the retellings, there were 10 items in each that students were expected to relate. Each item counted 1 point, the perfect score being 10. Table 6 shows the scores of the students' initial retelling and their final one.

Table 6

Comparison of Scores of 30 Respondents on Retellings

Score	1st retelling	Final retelling
10	0	3
9	0	4
8	0	5
7	0	9
6	0	3

(table continues)

Score	1st retelling	Final retelling
5	1	2
4	9	3
3	5	1
2	7	0
1	8	0
0	0	0

A comparative analysis of the results of the listing of vocabulary words by category given at the beginning and at the end of implementation showed improvement by all students. When given 15 minutes to list as many vocabulary words within a given category in both French and in English at the beginning of implementation, only two students were able to indicate as many as eight words. In fact, all except five students correctly listed only six or fewer. Four students were unable to respond at all. At the end of the process 20 students listed at least 12 words; 4 listed 18 words; 2 students listed 20 words; 1 student produced a list of 24 words. All the students at least doubled the number of correct responses; 13 tripled their scores.

A comparison of the scores of the target group on the pretest (see Appendix C) and the posttest (see Appendix D)

as shown in Table 7 illustrates that objectives 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 were achieved.

Table 7

Comparison of Pre- and Posttest Scores of 30 Respondents

Subj	Race	Gen	Gr	Prtst	Pstst	% of improv
1	C	F	12	30	53	77
2	C	M	12	36	90	150
3	C	F	12	40	96	140
4	C	M	12	58	86	48
5	C	M	12	44	80	82
6	C	M	12	64	76	19
7	A	F	12	44	96	118
8	C	M	12	52	68	31
9	C	F	11	34	84	147
10	B	M	11	32	70	119
11	C	F	11	34	80	135
12	B	F	11	40	78	95
13	C	M	11	50	88	76
14	A	F	11	44	72	64
15	A	F	11	36	90	150
16	C	F	11	54	84	56
17	C	F	11	54	100	85

(table continues)

Subj	Race	Gen	Gr	Prtst	Pstst	% of improv
18	B	F	11	32	62	94
19	B	M	11	30	48	26
20	A	M	11	44	82	86
21	A	M	11	30	48	60
22	C	F	11	32	66	106
23	C	M	11	16	72	350
24	C	M	11	64	88	38
25	C	F	11	52	82	58
26	B	F	10	64	94	47
27	C	F	10	38	76	100
28	C	M	10	50	74	48
29	C	F	10	58	100	72
30	C	F	10	50	94	88
Mean				44	79	80

The degree to which these objectives were achieved by grade level and by gender and grade is shown graphically in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1. Reading comprehension results by grade level.

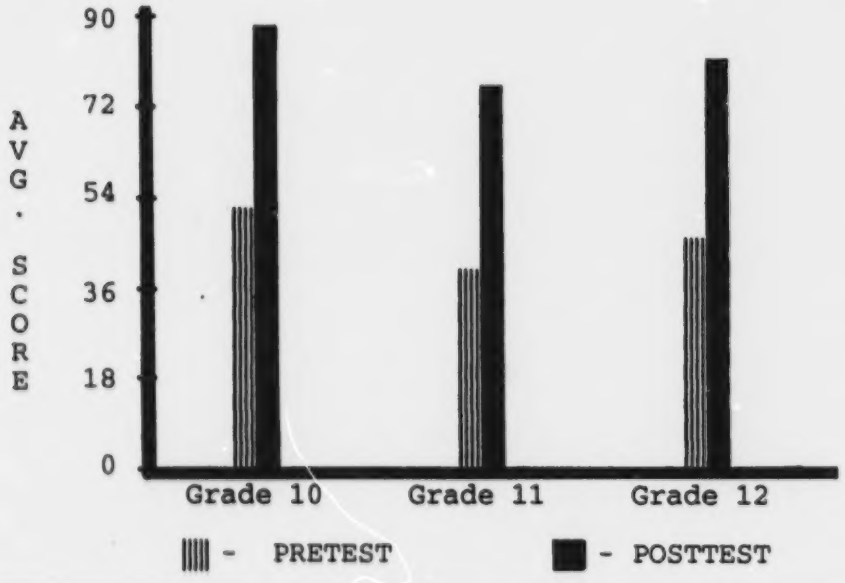
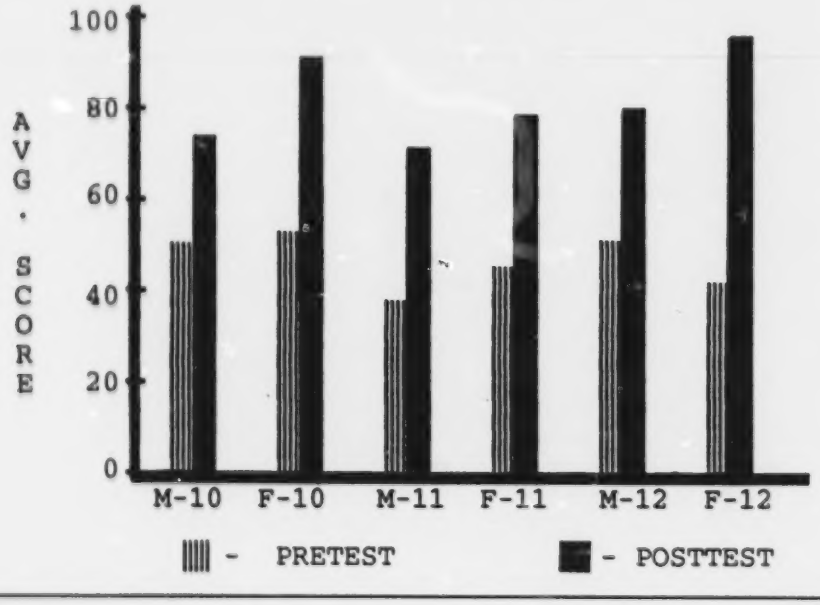


Figure 2. Comparison of reading comprehension results of pre- and posttest by gender and grade.



As displayed in Figures 1 and 2, 12th-grade females achieved the highest score on the posttest of all the groups with a mean score of 96. Of the males, those in the 12th grade performed highest with a posttest mean score of 80. Eleventh-grade males scored lower than any other group on the pretest with a 38; 11th-grade females' mean score on the same test was second with a 41. When grouped by gender, the females performed better than the males by six points with a mean score of 83 on the posttest; their pretest score was 43, one point less than the males' on the same test.

Objective 4 is represented by section A on the pretest/posttest and was successfully achieved. While 21 out of 30 students were successful in answering correctly seven or more questions on the posttest, only one student achieved at that level on the pretest. Interestingly, that student was one of two who showed no improvement of performance in responding to questions over a reading on the posttest. On the pretest 23 students answered five or fewer questions; on the posttest eight students responded correctly to five or fewer questions, and all students answered as many as three questions. Two students achieved 100% on section B. Students scored highest on items 1 and 2, with 30 and 28 correct responses respectively and scored lowest on items 6 and 7, with 13 and 12 correct responses respectively.

Objective 5 is represented by section B on the pretest/posttest and was successfully achieved. No student achieved more than six correct responses on the pretest; but on the posttest of the 22 who scored seven or more, only 4 students scored no more than seven. Eight students achieved 100%. The best scores on the posttest were on items 1, 4, 5, and 10, with at least 27 students choosing the correct meanings. Item 8 proved to be the most difficult; it produced 14 correct responses. Items 2, 7, and 9 resulted in five correct answers on the pretest; only item 10 produced more than 18 correct responses on the same test.

Objective 6 is represented by section C on the pretest/posttest and was successfully achieved. This section provided the most success on both tests. Only items 6 and 8 proved to be difficult, even on the pretest; they allowed 20 and 6 correct responses respectively. Only five students scored less than seven on the pretest; one scored 10. All students scored seven or more on the posttest; 19 students made a perfect score.

Objective 7 is represented by section D on the pretest/posttest and was successfully achieved. Of the 27 students who were successful in creating a visual on the posttest with at least 7 of the 10 features required, 18 made a perfect score. On the pretest four students included as many as seven features in their drawing; 16 had four or fewer correct features. As many as 25 students drew the

three items of clothing on the pretest; and while 11 included a suitcase, only 9 drew it in the left hand. Of the two students who gave the character in their drawing a beard, only one indicated that it extended to the knees. On the posttest, however, 27 or more drawings included the shirt, pants, hat, and the suitcase. This time 19 students drew the suitcase in the left hand; and of the 28 who drew the beard, 24 depicted it to the knees.

One of the visuals with a long beard was that of a female; the other 29 visuals were depictions of a male as stated in the description. The smile was found in 14 of the first visuals and in 28 of those on the posttest. Ten students made their character fat in the earlier drawing and 26 in the latter. The posttest produced 18 perfect scores in this section. One student created perfect visuals on both tests; she was one of the two whose performance was 100% on the posttest.

A comparison of the pretest and posttest scores as presented in Table 8 illustrates the success of the practicum.

Table 8.

Ranking of Test Scores of 30 Respondents

Score	Pretest	Posttest
100	0	2
96	0	2
94	0	2
90	0	2
88	0	2
86	0	1
84	0	2
82	0	2
80	0	2
78	0	1
76	0	2
74	0	1
72	0	2
70	0	1
68	0	1
66	0	1
64	3	0
62	0	1
58	2	0

(table continues)

Score	Pretest	Posttest
54	2	0
52	2	1
50	3	0
48	0	2
44	4	0
40	2	0
38	1	0
36	2	0
34	2	0
32	3	0
30	3	0
16	1	0

Of the 24 students who performed at the level of 70 and above on the posttest, 8 earned 90 or above. A comparison of the pretest mean score of 44 and the posttest mean score of 79 produced 80% improvement, far exceeding the expectations of the writer at the beginning of the implementation period.

The evaluation process indicated that the strategies used to improve the reading proficiency of the students produced favorable results as evinced by their achievement

of the objectives stated by the writer. The writer offers that the implementation process was effectuated as the result of the writer's enthusiasm for teaching and her belief in the importance of the role of reading proficiency in foreign languages, the students' cooperative efforts, the activities' being presented as a corollary to the lesson, the varied learning opportunities afforded the students to develop language skills, and the flexibility inherent in the process that allowed students to make decisions affecting them individually and as a group.

Recommendations

1. The writer recommends that the foreign language teacher support advocacy of reading as well as the other basic language skills - listening, speaking, writing, and culture - by assuming an active role in professional organizations.

2. The writer recommends that the teacher extensively read recently published books and journal articles written by authorities in reading and second language learning and instruction.

3. The writer recommends that the teacher become an avid collector of reading materials and realia written in the target language and use them creatively as teaching ancillaries.

4. The writer recommends that teaching strategies foster a non-threatening, nurturing environment for learning.

5. The writer recommends that reading be taught in the target language as much as is feasible.

6. The writer recommends flexibility of teaching strategies that emphasize student-centered activities in order to solicit optimal learning.

7. The writer recommends that the teacher present reading comprehension activities as a corollary to the lesson rather than as isolated exercises.

8. The writer recommends that the teacher be a facilitator, informant, and role model to students in the development of their language skills and to provide learning opportunities in reading beyond the confines of this practicum.

Dissemination

The writer plans to present an in-service workshop and a staff development course based on this practicum to other foreign language teachers within the county system of education. Further, she intends to share this practicum on state and regional levels by presenting workshops at professional meetings of foreign language educators.

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APPENDIX A

READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

Name_____
Date_____

READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

A. Complete the following statements by writing the letter that best indicates your personal reaction to each one.

(A) usually (B) sometimes (D) rarely (E) never

1. I like to read in English.....____
2. I read in English with ease.....____
3. I like to read in French.....____
4. I read in French with ease.....____
5. I read more in French than is required to pass this course.....____
6. When I read in French, I attempt to recognize cognates and borrowed words.....____
7. I am satisfied with my ability to read in French.....____
8. I would like to have more reading practice in French.....____
9. I like individual reading activities in French.....____
10. I like reading activities in French that include a partner or a group.....____

11. I would like more opportunities to read in French (Choose five and rank them in order, 1 being your first choice, 5 being your last choice.)

News items.....____

Magazine articles.....____

Poems and songs.....____

Short stories.....____

Books.....____

Signs and advertisements.....____

Personal correspondence.....____

Comics and cartoons.....____

Menus.....____

B. Rate the following types of comprehension checks over reading by ranking them from 1 to 5, 1 being your first choice, 5 being your last choice.

Summarize or retell the reading.....____

Answer questions about the reading.....____

Guess the meanings of new words.....____

Make lists of vocabulary words by categories.....____

Draw pictures based on written descriptions.....____

APPENDIX B

READING COMPREHENSION TEST

Name_____
Date_____

READING COMPREHENSION TEST

A. Pretend that the following statements or questions are part of a conversation between two people. Then from the choices (a-e)) choose the one that logically follows the first.

1. Faites venir le médecin.....____

2. Si on allait voir les feux d'artifice?.....____

3. Allô, Madame. Adèle est là?.....____

4. Pour retrouver le Louvre, tournez à gauche au coin de la rue et continuez tout droit....____

5. Il y aura des voitures en l'an 2020?.....____

a. Non, merci. Ça ne me dit rien.

b. Est-ce que le musée est tout près?

c. Pourquoi? Tu es malade?

d. A mon avis, oui, mais je crois qu'elles seront très différentes.

e. Ne quittez pas. Je vais te la passer.

B. Following the instructions for section A, complete section B.

1. Tu me manqueras tellement.....____

2. Il est presque minuit et demi.....____

3. Combien coûte ce fromage?.....____

4. Qu'est-ce que tu as vu?.....____

5. Je pense qu'on pourra vivre éternellement.....____

a. Vingt-cinq francs. Le voudriez-vous?

b. Rien. J'ai dû rester chez moi parce que j'avais mal à la tête.

c. Moi, je ne crois pas que tu aies raison.

d. Pourquoi? Tu t'en vas? Alors, on se verra lundi soir à dix-neuf heures.

e. Déjà? Je dois me coucher tout de suite.

C. Consult the HOROSCOPE to find your zodiac sign and write it here_____. Then read your horoscope for the week of March 17-23, and translate into English as much as possible. You may use an English/French dictionary.

March 17_____

March 18_____

March 19_____

March 20_____

March 21_____

March 22_____

March 23_____

APPENDIX C

PRETEST/POSTTEST

Name_____

PRETEST/POSTTEST

A. Read the passage written in French and included with this test. Then write brief answers in English to the following questions based on the reading.

1. How has Clotaire's appearance changed?

_____

2. How does Clotaire explain his failure to succeed in school?_____

3. What is Nicolas' explanation for Clotaire's academic failure?_____

4. How do Clotaire's classmates feel about him?

_____

5. What is Agnan's fear about school?

_____

6. What do Clotaire and Agnan argue about?

_____

7. Why does Clotaire not allow Alceste to borrow his glasses?_____

8. What favor do the other boys ask of Clotaire?

_____

9. Why does the teacher scold Alceste?

_____

10. Why does Clotaire perform badly at the board?

_____

B. Locate the following new words and phrases underlined in the reading passage. Judging by the context in which they are found, make guesses as to their meaning. Then circle the choice that is the best meaning for each.

1. des tas de lettres
   a. une ligne
   b. trois
   c. beaucoup

2. l'empêchera
   a. ne lui permettra pas
   b. va pêcher
   c. l'aidera

3. lui taper dessus
   a. le regarder
   b. parler avec lui
   c. le frapper

4. chouchou
   a. l'élève préféré
   b. le légume
   c. le garçon

5. Tout le temps
   a. Toujours
   b. En classe
   c. quand il neige

6. Ça va faire des histoires
   a. J'aurai des problèmes
   b. Mon père sera fier
   c. Je ne pourrai pas voir

7. un drôle de travail
   a. bizarre
   b. difficile
   c. facile

8. lâche
   a. mauvais élève
   b. ami
   c. personne sans courage

9. s'était bien essuyé
   a. s'était regardé
   b. s'était brossé
   c. s'était levé

10. faire le clown
    a. s'amuser
    b. parler
    c. penser au cirque

C. Decide if the following statements are true or false according to the picture. Then write TRUE or FALSE in the spaces provided.

1._____La famille écoute la météo.

2._____Tout le monde est content.

3._____Il va faire chaud.

4._____Lili pense à jouer dans la neige.

5._____Jacques est moins âgé que Paul.

6._____Claudine sera heureuse de sortir.

7._____Bernard préfère le temps froid.

8._____Toutes les filles sont assises.

9._____Deux garçons sont tristes.

10._____Paul est près de la radio.

D. Read the following description of le vieux Pierre. Then draw a picture of him as described.

C'est un petit gros homme. Il porte un chapeau sur la tête, une chemise, et un pantalon. Il a une valise à la main gauche. Il est fier de sa longue barbe qui s'étend jusqu'aux genoux. Evidemment il est heureux parce qu'il a un grand sourire.